

EXHIBIT C

Massoud could be the next great one from New York City

[Alex Gleitman](#) - Jan 23, 11:17 AM [Comment 4](#)



NEW YORK - Cardinal Hayes High School in the Bronx has been a solid athletics program for a long time, churning out some big time talent in notable alumni [Willie Colon](#) ([//247sports.com/Player/Willie-Colon-76264](#)) (9-year NFL veteran), Kevin Loughery (11-years as player in NBA and then more as a coach), Jamal Mashburn (12-year NBA vet; former No. 4 overall pick), and most recently Erle Ladson (Raiders & Browns).

While the school, and particularly its football program, has great history, Hayes hasn't necessarily gotten the attention from Division I coaches on the recruiting trail over the years.

Under head coach CJ O'Neill and his staff, things have started to change on that end, though, as has been the case for other high school programs around New York City, who are starting to produce some players that are among the best in the country.

At Cardinal Hayes alone, O'Neill has hosted Maryland, Coastal Carolina, N.C. State, Rutgers, Penn State, Wisconsin, Georgia, Bucknell, Temple, Buffalo, Army, Stony Brook, Brown, and others over the last few weeks. The program has 2017 WR [Shameen Jones](#) ([//247sports.com/Player/Shameen-Jones-88044](#)) heading to Rutgers in June, 2017 QB/ATH [Christian Anderson](#) ([//247sports.com/Player/Christian-Anderson-91987](#)) going to Army, 2017 DE [Ibrahim Kante](#) ([//247sports.com/Player/Ibrahim-Kante-91931](#)) headed to N.C. State, and 2018 OT [Qadir White](#) ([//247sports.com/Player/Qadir-White-90885](#)) ranked as a four-star and holding offers from many of the top programs in America, among other players emerging on the recruiting scene.

One of those players may end up being better than the aforementioned stars, in Class of 2020 ATH [Sofian Massoud](#) ([//247sports.com/Player/Sofian-Massoud-45572668](#)). The 6-foot-1, 175-pound Massoud started for Hayes at safety as a freshman, and made an instant impact, recording 54 tackles, 5 interceptions, 12 pass break-ups, 4 forced fumbles, and 2 fumbles recovered for the league champion and state runner-up.

He was named Second Team All-NYC and [was named by MaxPreps as a First Team Freshman All-American](#) (http://www.maxpreps.com/news/N_OsfPjq9kmI3QclPxFDig/maxpreps-2016-football-freshman-all-american-team.htm). Don't forget that he's in the school's honors program, and currently holds a 94 average, too.

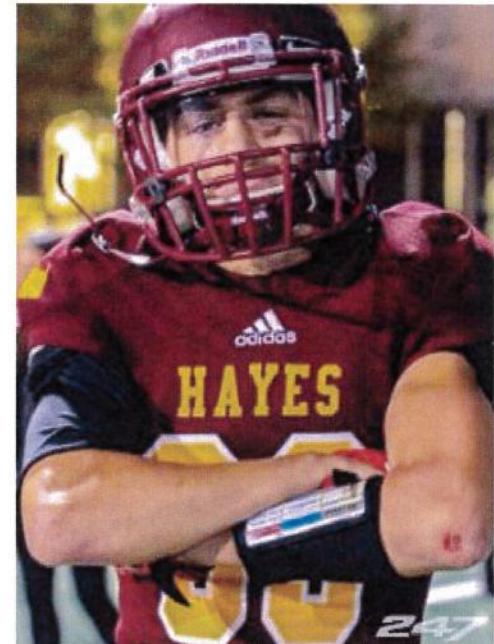
And the best part about Massoud is that in talking to him, you would never know it. He's extremely humble, not to mention wise beyond his years, deflecting the credit of his personal achievements to his teammates, and knowing that he had a tremendous opportunity to learn a ton from a great group of upperclassmen this past season.

"I was blessed to be a part of a great team, and around players and a coaching staff that allowed me to make plays," Massoud told 247Sports of his 2016 season. "Of course it felt good to have a successful team season and individual season, and to receive those honors, but it didn't come overnight. It's been a long road and I have plenty of work to still get done."

"Being the youngest kid on the team I looked up to kids like Qadir, Shameen, Lucas [Nunez], and Souleymane [Camara]. Coming in those guys guided me and assured me that they had confidence in me, and they pushed me everyday in practice. It was definitely a blessing being able to play with those guys."



Massoud has a chance to be a special player (Photo: Jon Tannen)



Massoud started at safety as a freshman for Hayes in 2016
(Photo: Jeffrey Armstrong)

In speaking to the coaches at Cardinal Hayes, they think Massoud has a chance to be *really* special, the same way that [Curtis Samuel](#) ([//247sports.com/Player/Curtis-Samuel-25841](#)) came out of New York City to become a national star at Ohio State. When made aware of that chatter, Massoud downplayed the praise, but didn't shy away from becoming a player who can continue to help put football in the Big Apple on the map.

"It's very humbling to hear that," he stated. "I'll do my best but it's a tough act to follow, solely based upon the guys that are graduating this year, along with those graduating next year, not to mention a couple Hayes greats like Erle Ladson and [Willie Colon](#) ([//247sports.com/Player/Willie-Colon-76264](#)). There have been a lot of greats coming out of the city too, like Leon Williams who went to 'The U', Alex Coombs, who went to West Virginia, and most recently, [Curtis Samuel](#) ([//247sports.com/Player/Curtis-Samuel-25841](#)) of Ohio State. It will definitely be nice to be mentioned alongside those names, but my focus is more so on putting NYC football on the map and getting us ballers the recognition we deserve."

Massoud is starting to get some of that recognition himself, as colleges around the country have been in touch recently, kicking off his recruiting process.

"I have spoken to Syracuse, Penn State, Temple, Wisconsin, Coastal Carolina, Brown, and Albany," he explained. "I'm interested in hearing from schools such as Ohio State, Michigan, Miami, Alabama, and LSU, just to name a few."

In time the offers will come in, and schools will be walking the Hayes hallways with the same frequency they did for Samuel at Erasmus Hall in Brooklyn. For now though, Massoud is tasked with a large role this off-season, as he likely will have to step up and play quarterback for the Cardinals, with Anderson departing.

He spoke about that transition, as well as how it impacts his projection at the next level.

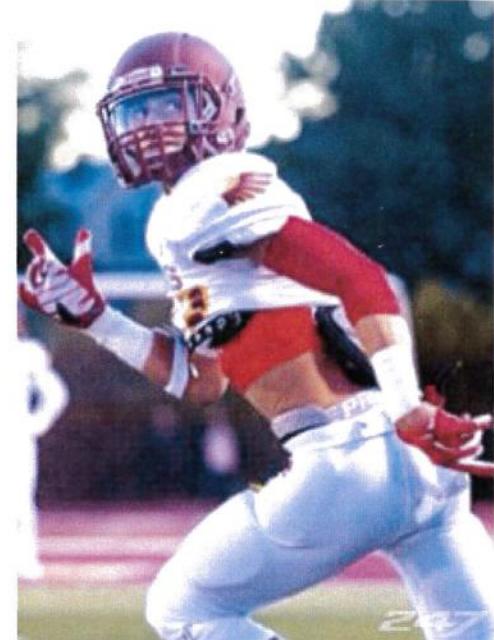
"Yeah, I will be playing QB next year," he responded when asked. "But that can't save opposing offenses. They'll definitely see me on both sides of the ball."

"I see myself more as an athlete, rather than being labeled at a specific position. I think that I am most effective when I am in situations to make plays, regardless of the position. I think at the next level you might find me on either side of the ball. Offensively, I'd most likely be a quarterback, and defensively I see myself being a safety/outside linebacker mix, because I'll most likely get to 6-foot-3 or taller. I can be a good matchup on tight ends with that kind of size."

And for the schools who do take a chance on Massoud, he assures them they will be getting someone who is going to make their program better.

"A future program is getting a FOOTBALL PLAYER, and not just a kid who just plays football," he said. "They're going to get someone who is willing to do the dirty work for the team as needed. I'll work hard in practice every day, and make plays on game day."

Finally, while there is so much more ahead for Massoud over the next three years he is in high school, he'll never forget his memorable freshman season, in which he played a big part in getting Hayes their first league title. He also wants college coaches around the country to know where to come and find the talent they are looking for.



Massoud will likely play quarterback next year (Photo: Jon Tannen)

"It was amazing being able to be a part of the first Hayes and NYC team to ever win the league championship, and play in a state title," he told 247Sports. "Our team had a bunch of guys who never got down on ourselves when we started off 0-3, and never got too high on ourselves when we went on a run, because we all had the goal of winning a championship on our minds. I learned that Hayes is the place to be for football in NYC along with NY state, and that NYC football is the place for coaches to come when looking Division I ballers. NYC football is usually given the short end of the stick when it comes to the Tri-state area, but we have just as much talent, if not more, than the Jersey schools. There are a bunch of hidden gems in NYC."

Author

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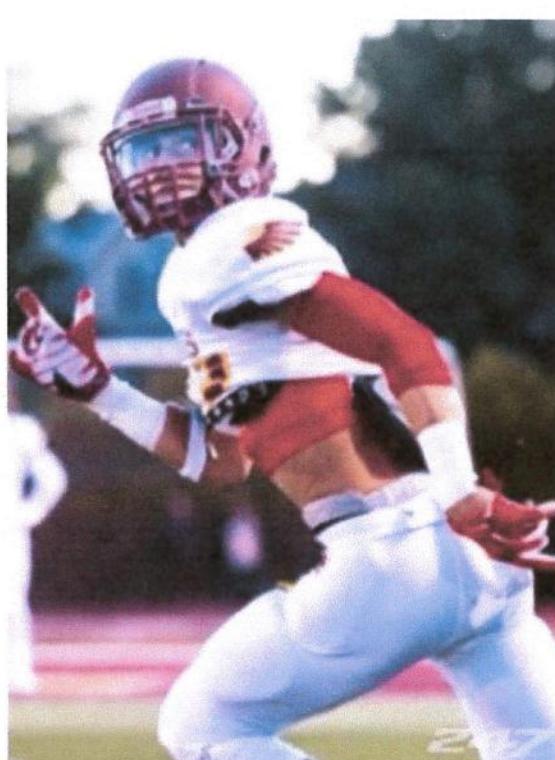
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